THE TRUE

ACCOUNT

OF THE

BEHAVIOUR

AND

CONFESSION

of the Criminals, Condemned on *Thurſday* the 15*th.* day of *April*, 1686. At *JUSTICE-HALL* in the *OLD-BAILY*

Viz. Peter Lary, John Toy, Elizabeth Churchill, John Crofts, John Steers, and *Rebeckah Roſe*, of which *Peter Lary*, was this preſent *Wedneſday* the 21*ſt.* of *April*, Executed at

TYBURN,

And the other five Repriev'd.

THe *Ordinary* firſt undertook this ſervice, to the Community, of publiſhing the Account of the Behaviour and Confeſſions of the Condemned Criminals in *Newgate*, that no perſons might be impoſed upon by others, who preſumed to Print falſe Reports concerning them.

Now, whereas ſome of late have expected that an Account ſhould be given of Confeſſions to be made at *Tyburn*. This the *Ordinary* hath endeavoured to bring the dying Malefactors unto, but they are ſomwhat Averſe to it there, becauſe they cannot be well heard, by reaſon of the Noiſe of the People, beſides the Conſternation which is upon them, being ready to be Executed, makes them ſay little, but only thus. *Take warning, not to come to this Fatal Place, to which we are brought, by the neglect of our Duty to God and Man*; and uſually deſire only, that the *Ordinary* would pray with them, and that they may do the like for themſelves.

This Account therefore he now gives, that on *Friday* which was the next Day, after the Sentence of Death paſſed upon the aforeſaid Criminals, he viſited them, and after he had prayed with them, earneſtly exhorted them, that they would beg of God to make them ſenſible of their ſeveral Crimes, that they would look back on the whole courſe of their Life; in-aſmuch, as the juſt God never leaves Sinners deſtitute of his preventing Grace, till they firſt harden their own Hearts, indulging themſelves in ſome ſecret Sins, thereby ſtrengthning vicious inclinations, to a conſiderable degree of *Atheiſm*, becauſe they are not ſome time diſcovered and brought to ſhame.

He told them, that they ought, having given Notorious Scandals, to make their penitential acknowledgments as publick for the warning of others, by their Example of ſuffering Juſtice, to avoid the ſame Crimes.

And that tho' they had quench'd the motions of God's Holy Spirit, and reſiſted the Convictions of their Conſcience formerly; yet now by this Fatal Stroke drawn upon themſelves.

He loudly calls them to Repentance, that ſo they may eſcape the Wrath which is to come.

Upon this, they began to be awakened from their Security in an Evil State, and to lament their former flagitious Courſes, which Relenting, the *Ordinary* Encouraged, yet adviſed them not to rely on any ſlight ſorrow for Sin, as if this were any ſatisfaction to God, for all the Exorbitances of their Converſations.

Here

Here he ſtated the differences betwixt True and Falſe Repentance, and the Nature of True Faith in coming to God for Reconciliation by Chriſt, to which, they were very attentive.

On *Saturday* I viſited them again, and told them that I expected a further Account from them of their fitneſs to Dye, than what I had already received.

I enquired what Frame and Diſpoſition of Heart they were in at preſent: Whither they retained thoſe good impreſſions which were upon them the day before. The replyed, *That they did.*

Then asking them what Hope they had, that God was reconciled to them in Chriſt, they replyed; *That they Prayed and did what they could, to obtain the Pardon of their Sins, and that they might be ſaved.* I aſſured them, that if they were willing to be happy on God's Terms, *viz.* If they deſired ſincerely to be Holy as much as to be Happy, then Chriſt's ſanctifying Spirit would become their Comforter.

Then I Exhorted them to prepare for the Duties of the *Lords Day*; becauſe it was likely to be the laſt *Sabbath* they would ſpend upon Earth.

After this, they were deſirous that I would pray with them again, which I did, and they promiſed me, that they would take pains with their own hearts in my Abſence, to fit themſelves for a future happy State. I told them, that they ought to aſſiſt one another to the utmoſt, in Order thereunto; conſidering how by their bad Counſel and Example, they had miſled others into ſinful Practices, and ſo diſmiſt them.

On the *Lords Day*, the *Ordinary* Preached on this Text, the 26 Chap. of St. *Matthew*, the 40 Verſe: *Watch and Pray, that ye enter not into Temptation.*

Theſe Words were Chriſt's Advice to his Diſciples, when he found them heavy aſleep, in the midſt of his Agonies, in the Night, immediately foregoing his being Apprehended to be Crucified. He Alarumed them from their Security, by enjoyning them to *Watch and Pray*, as being moſt forcible in Conjunction. If we Pray not, we diſarm our ſelves, Satan gets an advantage of our ſloath: If we *Watch not in Praying*, and after it, to maintain a ſpiritual Frame; we make our Prayer fruitleſs and ineffectual; *Prayer keeps us watching*, and this makes Prayer available.

1ſt. We have need to *Watch in Praying*; and to *Pray in Watching*, becauſe Temptations alway await us in our Chriſtian Station.

2ly. It is very dangerous through careleſneſs of our Duty, to expoſe our ſelves to the leaſt approach of a Temptation, (*leſt ye enter.*

3ly. Such who *Watch and Pray* with a due frame of heart, ſhall ordinarily be kept out of Temptation, or not left in it to themſelves. If they enter into it, they ſhall not fall under the Power of it Totally and Finally.

4ly. Pray, leſt (ye) my Diſciples, *Enter into Temptation*: Obſerve, the beſt of Men cannot promiſe themſelves to be free, and exempt from Satans Stratagems or Aſſaults. Theſe are the Tryals of Sincerity, the Exerciſe and ſtrengthening of real Grace. The Chriſtians Alarum againſt Security; otherwiſe, we ſhould be good by Neceſſity, rather than Choice: If we did not ſtrive for Victory againſt Sin, Satan, and the World.

5ly. Chriſtians muſt *Watch and Pray*, eſpecially againſt ſuch Temptations, which moſt beſet their preſent State and Condition of Life, or at the approach of Death.

6ly. Tho' the Lord over-rules Temptations to a good Iſſue in the Godly, yet they are not to expoſe themſelves by ſecurity, in any expectation of that good which comes by Accident. Temporal Victories are got by Fighting, but Spiritual by flying the occaſion of ſinning. God is not bound to Aid us in thoſe Temptations, which we thruſt our ſelves upon.

After theſe Obſervations raiſed from the Text, the *Ordinary* proceeded to ſhew wherein the Nature of true watchfulneſs conſiſts; and in what Reſpects, Prayer in Conjunction, contributes to the declining or defeatment of Temptations. Then he deſcribed ſome Symptoms in perſons lyable to enter upon the Borders of Temptations, and ſome means in the uſe of which, they might be avoided, or the effect and prevalencys of them, much broken and abated.

Alſo he gave ſome Directions, how to get out of the Snare of Satans Temptation, when taken therein.

And aſſigned ſome Conſiderations whereby the ſeveral Temptations of Diſcouragement or Preſumption in the approaches of Death, may be over-come.

Laſtly, he Addreſſed himſelf to the condemned

demned Criminals, by a practical improvement of the precedent Discourse to their particular distressed Estate.

In the Afternoon, a Sermon was Preached on the 95*th*. *Psalm*, and the 8*th*. Verse. *To day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.* From which, were deduced these general Considerations.

1st. *By what various kind of Voices doth the Lord call upon, and invite Sinners unto Repentance?*

2dly. *In what Respects, are we said to hear and obey these Voices.*

3dly. *That by not attending to them, the Heart becomes gradually hardened, by the deceits of Sin and Satan.*

4thly. *That to prevent such obduration of Heart, and provocation of God by it: It is the Duty of all Persons, to day without delay, to comply with, and improve the distinct voices and Calls of God unto Repentance and amendment of Life.* These Generals were treated of very pathetically, and the Auditory much affected therewith.

On *Monday* the *Ordinary* Repaired to the Condemned Criminals, and inquired of them what Divine impressions were made upon their hearts by the Prayers and Sermons on the *Lords Day*; and took a farther Account of their fitness for their approaching Death; and they readily complyed with his desires.

John Toy, about 19 or 20 Years of Age, said that he was bred a Seaman, was the fourth Mate in an *East-India* Ship, had 50 *s. per* Month Wages; might have lived well on the Sea Employment, and intended for a Voyage in a Ship now ready to put to Sea: But for two Months past he fell into bad Company, which miss-led him into some Extravegancies, as Drinking, and other miss-spending of his time. He denyed not the Fact for which he is Condemned. Idleness he said, brought on the neglect of his Duty to God, whereby, he took to this unlawful Course of taking money by Violence: But he says it is the first Fact of this Nature that he Committed. *He* affirmed, that it is no little trouble to him, that he hath sinned against clear Light, and the frequent Convictions of his Conscience, which now Recurr to mind, and do aggravate the sins of his miss-spent Life. But he hopes if he may obtain his Majesty's Pardon, that he shall lead a New Life, in serving God and the King Faithfully.

I told him and the other Criminals, how deceitful the heart of man is; this hath too often been sadly experienced in some, who after they have been Reprieved and set at Liberty, have abused God and the King's mercy, by the greater aggravation of their sins, having been Cut off in a short time by publick Justice, for Committing fresh and greater Crimes. I admonished them therefore, to distrust their own hearts, for as much as sincere Repentance is not so easie a work after sin hath been strengthened by custome, and that it requires some considerable time to manifest the sound Fruits and effects thereof. But some Criminals after they are spared, forget the Vows made to God in their distress, and their good Resolutions of Reformation vanish, when their fears of Death are blown over.

Upon this, they did say, that they did pray to God, that they might be sincere in their sorrow for their sin, and that his Grace hitherto, had lead them to Repentance.

Secondly, *John Steers*, was Condemned for breaking up the house of *Edward Wiseman*, on the 4*th*. of *March* last, and Apprehended in the Prosecutors house. *He* said that he was Born in *Middlesex*, at *Shadwell*, that he is Nineteen Years of Age. the Employment he was bred up to, was to be a Seaman; that he had served his Majesty formerly in the War against the *Dutch*, that afterwards he was entertained as a Soldier at *Tangier*; that since the Demolishing the Forts there, he came over into *England*, and wishes that he had not followed an Idle Course of Life: This brought him to Poverty, and was the temptation of joyning himself to bad Company, and to contract acquaintance with some Leud Women. *He* expresst himself to be penitent for all his other sins, which he said were many and great. It grieved him that he had not observed the *Lords Day*, that he had neglected to Pray, that God would daily keep him from Temptations of sinning against him. But he hoped that he would give him Faith and Repentance, to fit him for another World,

That he doth not dispair of Gods mercy, but endeavour what he can to make peace with him, through *Christ*, that death might not be terrible unto him.

Thirdly, *Peter Lary*, Condemned for stealing a silver Tankard, value 5 *l*. of the goods